

The Bethel Courier.

Volume XIII, Number 2

Summer 1989

Bethel Historical Society

PORTRAIT OF A PATRIARCH: DR. MOSES MASON

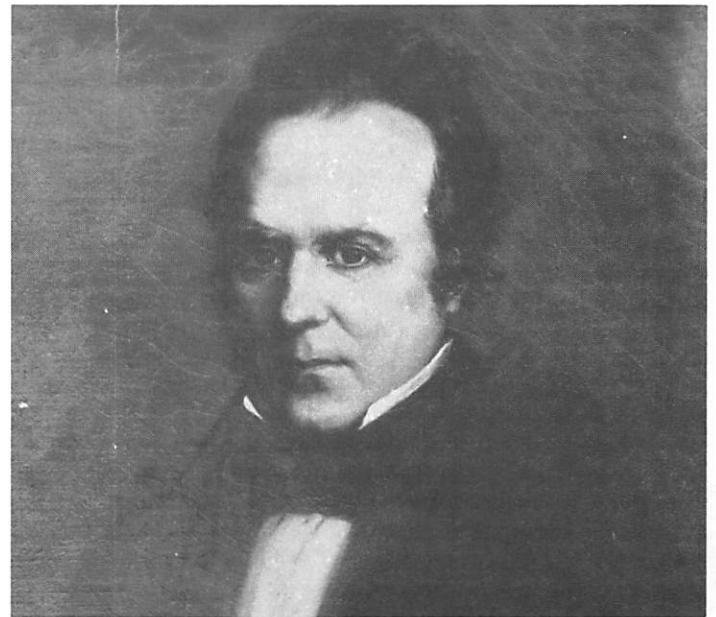
Editor's Note: During the Society's observance of Dr. Mason's 200th birthday on May 28, 1989 Society Director Stanley R. Howe made remarks on Dr. Mason, some of which appear below:

On this 200th anniversary of Dr. Moses Mason's birth, it may be useful to look at what his life may mean to us today. One of the first images that comes to us when his name is mentioned is that of the patriarch. Indeed his "long white hair, blue swallowtail coat with brass buttons, buff vest, ruffled shirt and beaver hat" recorded by a contemporary contributed to this image. But patriarch applies to those who have (or had) considerable influence upon others. Dr. Mason, for many reasons, was able to exert an influence upon others not only in his home town, but in western Maine and in the State as well. He seems even to have been a popular figure (and behind the scenes influential one) during his two terms in Washington as U.S. Congressman from Maine, if we can believe accounts left by some of his contemporaries. Perhaps part of the reason for this is contained in a letter to a Maine correspondent in 1836 when he wrote, "We try to be as economical as we can but when with the Romans we must do as they do."

Mason's crucial decision to become a medical doctor instead of continuing the family tradition of farming was perhaps the decisive one. He went to Newfield to apprentice under his physician brother-in-law in 1811, teaching school while there to support himself. Returning to Bethel in April 1813 with medical certificate in hand, he had the foresight to build on a spot that would become the center of town. His medical practice brought him some prestige, but becoming Bethel's first postmaster undoubtedly solidified his image. He was genuinely excited about the mail business since he recalled toward the end of his life that the greatest moment had not been (as it was for others) the arrival of the railroad to Bethel in 1851 but when he heard the postal rider's horn for the first time in 1815.

Dr. Mason was also fortunate in his timing. He fitted in perfectly with what was going on in Maine at the time. He was a Baptist in an era when the Baptists and Methodists were challenging the established order of Congregationalism. He also was decidedly anti-Federalist in his political beliefs, a position that was embraced by the majority of his fellow citizens in the hinterland of Maine following the War of 1812.

Mason's personal qualities also helped him acquire the image of patriarch of the town. He was genial, generous with his time, and always ready to offer sound advice. As a justice of the peace he was involved in a variety of quasi-legal cases and married many couples in his house, endearing himself to numerous brides by collecting the fee from their intended and promptly turning it over to them. His political positions, selectman,



Dr. Moses Mason ca. 1830s (photo of the Chester Harding portrait)

SOCIETY COMMEMORATES DR. MASON'S 200th BIRTHDAY

Dr. Moses Mason's 200th birthday was observed on Sunday, May 28 at the Dr. Moses Mason House. A large cake celebrating the 200th anniversary of Dr. Mason's birth was made by Diane Howe and served to those present. Strawberry punch was poured in the winter kitchen by Persis Post. Once again Ernest and Betty Perkins portrayed the Doctor and his wife Agnes. Judith Haskell, head of the Society's Museum Committee, served as hostess and provided tours of the house to those wishing them. Craft demonstrations included those by Lorrie Hoeh, knitting and Althea Stevens, spinning. Helen Morton sketched and painted from the upstairs landing. A special exhibit commemorating Dr. Mason's 200th anniversary "Celebration 200" was placed in the entrance to the museum. During the afternoon Society Director Stanley R. Howe, author of the Society booklet, DR. MOSES MASON AND HIS HOUSE, made a presentation on the good Doctor, stressing his role as town patriarch.

county commissioner, U.S. representative, member of the Governor's Council, trustee of the State Insane Hospital, etc. all added to his image and prestige.

As a builder of mills on Pleasant River beginning in 1827, his influence among his neighbors grew. Following his retirement from Congress, when he turned his attention largely to mills

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(Moses Mason continued from page 1)

and land speculation, this influence was greatly enlarged. Eventually he would operate two grist mills, one carding and one shingle mill and own thousands of acres of land. Parts of three grants were merged to form the town of Mason, named in his honor, in 1843. To Richard M. Candee in his essay in *MAINE IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC*, Dr. Mason was an outstanding example of the entrepreneurial presence which was often the first stage in the creation of the village center. Nothing could be truer in Bethel's case; his settlement at Bethel Hill coincided with developments in the town's evolving nature.

Mason possessed vision, but his judgement was not infallible. His proposal to build a canal from the Androscoggin to Harrison to join the Cumberland and Oxford Canal did not take into account the emerging enthusiasm for rail transportation. For the most part, however, Mason's intuition was sound, his business acumen sharp. He really liked business better than medicine and he was good at it.

One of the best insights from a contemporary comes from John Fairfield, United States Representative, who served in the House with Dr. Mason. Fairfield, later Governor of Maine and United States Senator, observed that Mason's "early advantages were small," and that he was "somewhat illiterate, but no one would suspect it by a casual intercourse with him." Fairfield continued:

He is man of good personal appearance, indeed, there are few handsomer men in the House, and has a good share of common sense. He seems to be a man of good principles, and of a kindly disposition. Upon the whole, I like the Doctor very well.

Fairfield's enthusiasm for his friend as well as his objectivity provide the most comprehensive view by a contemporary.

Mason's genial and generous nature is detailed in Lapham's *HISTORY OF BETHEL* and accounts for at least some of his popularity and influence. His opening of the grove in back of his house to the townspeople for summer gatherings, for example, enhanced this popularity and provided one more indication of his patriarchal status, which he seemed to relish.

Dr. Mason's final project, during which he contracted pneumonia and died, was the landscaping of Woodland Cemetery. Here once again is reflected his kindly and generous nature in this project for the community. Woodland, with its countless terraces, exists today as one of Bethel's most interesting burial grounds, vivid testimony to Dr. Mason's vision and leadership.

In closing, it is important to stress that much more work needs to be done in studying leadership in New England towns along the lines that Edward M. Cook, Jr. has done in his seminal work *THE FATHERS OF THE TOWNS: LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY STRUCTURE IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY NEW ENGLAND*. Dr. Mason remains an outstanding example of leadership in a New England town. In this two hundredth anniversary of his birth, it is important to see what meaning his life may have in exploring the image and reality of the New England patriarch.

IN MEMORIAM

Died, Rockville, MD, June 17, 1989, William W. Howe, life member of the Society. Died, Norway, ME, August 5, 1989, Edith Eaton Eddy, life member, former Society secretary and clerk of the trustees. Mrs. Eddy was very active in the work of the Society, serving as a guide in the museum, as a member of the Society's museum committee, as a craft demonstrator at the Society's heritage festivals and the Noll Award Selection Committee.

MASON FAMILY GATHERING HELD

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Dr. Moses Mason's birth, the Society invited descendants of Dr. Mason's great-great grandfather Captain Hugh Mason and his wife Hester of Watertown, MA to the Society headquarters in Bethel. More than sixty appeared on July 1 from many parts of New England. A special Mason exhibit opened during the day and Society Director Stanley R. Howe made a slide presentation in the afternoon on the Mason family of Bethel. Mrs. Elizabeth Mason Carter, a Mason descendant and one of the Society's charter members, assisted those interested with genealogy. Tours of the Dr. Moses Mason House Museum were enjoyed by many of those attending. Much enthusiasm was expressed for another gathering next year to coincide once again with the summer opening of the Dr. Moses Mason House Museum. Anyone interested in receiving information on the Mason family gathering should write the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217 or call (207) 824-2908.

10th ANNUAL FAYE TAYLOR MEMORIAL ART SHOW HELD ON MAY 27

On May 27, the tenth annual Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show was held in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House. A great number of entries were received from SAD #44 students (grades 1-6) relating to this year's theme of Dr. Moses Mason's 200th birthday and his times. Judges this year were Sandra Clement, Arla Patch and Romeo Baker. Winners in Division I (Grades 1 & 2) were first, Heidi Kanes, Grade 2, Woodstock Elementary School, second, Adam Williamson, Grade 2, Andover Elementary School, third, Megan Paquette, Grade 1, Crescent Park School. Those getting the judge's nod in Division II (Grades 3 & 4) were first, Caitlin Bass, Grade 3, Crescent Park School, second, Kelli Szente, Grade 4, Andover Elementary School, third, Amy Hale, Grade 4, Crescent Park School. Winners in Division III (Grades 5 & 6) were first, Angela Szente, Grade 6, Andover Elementary School, second, Samantha Poland, Grade 6, Crescent Park School, third, Kevin Mullen, Grade 6, Woodstock Elementary School. Winners received certificates of award, a ribbon, plus cash prizes. The show is supported in part by a donation from the Bethel Savings Bank. Much appreciation is expressed to all teachers and administrators and especially to the students who made it all possible. A special thanks is also due the volunteers who select and hang the art.

REFLECTIONS OF A HALF CENTURY

(continued from the last issue)

By Leslie E. Davis

The significance of Earl's taking me to Bethel in the Model T touring car is the fact that until the year 1927, during the winter months, the roads were not plowed for automobile travel; snow was allowed to accumulate and the roads were dirt surface, no tarvia; in March, they were almost impassable. Snow drifts in some places and deep mud holes in others so an automobile trip called for shoveling snow in some places, and everybody out to push through mud holes in others. I remember this particular trip as a rather wild and rough one, but we made it, the twelve miles out and twelve back.

For the next two or three weeks I had to get to Bethel about twice a week to have my fingers dressed; as the mill was running days we usually went in the evening. Some of the trips through the mud were pretty wild. There didn't seem to be anyone else that we could get to do the filing so I kept right on the job as it was easier to stand the pain and discomfort if I was

(continued on page 4)



Bethel Historical Society Life Member Philip Chadbourne discusses a scaler's rule with Richard Judd (right) Assistant Professor of History at the University of Maine, who spoke on logging and lumbering in Maine at the June monthly meeting. Photo courtesy of Donald S. Brown.

MAINE KIMBALLS MEET IN AUGUST

Once again the Maine Kimballs gathered at the Dr. Moses Mason House for their annual gathering. Kimballs arrived from many parts of Maine and enjoyed an extensive program organized by Kimball descendant Elizabeth Mason Carter.

NATHAN MISEROCCHI WINS DR. MOSES MASON AWARD

Nathan Miserocchi, a junior at Telstar Regional High School, received the 1989 Dr. Moses Mason Award for his essay on the history of Andover High School. Each year the Society awards a certificate of commendation and a \$100 U.S. savings bond to the high school student who submits, in the opinion of the judges, an essay which best meets the guidelines of the award. The essay must be an original piece of work based on primary sources. The award was made at the annual awards ceremony at Telstar in June. This year's judges were Society members Rosalind R. Chapman, Margaret Joy Tibbetts, and Edmond J. Vachon.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

N. T. BARTHOLOMAEI, LaGrangeville, NY, is a 1939 graduate of Gould Academy and a descendant of Dr. Nathaniel Tuckerman True (1812-1887), prominent citizen of Bethel and a founder of Gould Academy. ALINE DUPONT, Bethel, has also donated the sign to the Society from her former Main Street business, The Fabric Emporium. SUSAN B. KETTINGER, Salem, NH is a 1966 graduate of Gould Academy. PATRICIA MOON, Denver, CO, is a retired social worker and a descendant of the Twitchell family of Bethel. DORIS STEVENS, Rexford, NY, is a descendant of the Brooks family of Grafton, ME.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Elsewhere in this issue, there is an audit report for 1987 & 1988. The trustees have periodically published the Society's financial standing in the COURIER. Those reading the report on page 6 closely may find cause for alarm since it would appear that the Society operated in a deficit position in 1987 and 1988. Be assured that in both years expenses included an accounting of more than \$10,000 in depreciation expenses and in 1987 Merchandise for Resale included a grant received before 1987 which does not appear as income. To date the Society has always operated in the black and it is hoped this will always be the case in the years to come.

SRH

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Summer is a wonderful time for family reunions. The weather makes travel easy and pleasant. Large groups can meet outdoors for picnics and games. This summer the Society was pleased that two large families, well-represented in this area, made use of the Dr. Moses Mason House and grounds.

On July 1 members of the Mason family gathered to help the Society open its summer season. The following month the Society was pleased to host the Maine Kimballs.

It is especially fitting that such important families were able to gather at the Society's headquarters because the names "Mason" and "Kimball" occur frequently in the Society's historical collections, genealogical records and donated memorabilia.

The family, whether small and close-knit or extended over many generations, is the core of human society and civilization. The Bethel Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation and enrichment of that most important human institution.

Marvin Ouwinga



Mildred C. Thomas

MEMBER PROFILE

Mildred C. Thomas

Born in Brooklyn, NY, the daughter of Arthur Stockman and Lillian Applegate Bailey, Mildred C. Thomas grew up on Long Island. As a small child, she dreamed of becoming a secretary; following high school, she graduated from Katherine Gibbs Secretarial College.

Beginning work in Manhattan, she continued there for some years. It was during this time she met her lifelong friend Ann Troy, who presently resides in Bryant Pond. With Ann, she visited Maine on a number of occasions.

She moved to Norfolk, VA after her marriage to James H. Thomas, a career Navy officer. She remained in the Norfolk area except for two years in Newfoundland. After returning to Norfolk, she resumed her secretarial career and later became a civil service employee. She later assumed the position of executive secretary to the Admiral at the Naval Safety Center where she remained for twenty years.

Retiring in 1977, she became a Red Cross volunteer. Following her husband's death in 1982 she moved to Maine and has resided on Paradise Road in Bethel since 1983.

A member of the West Parish Congregational Church, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Norfolk, VA Fleet Reserve Auxiliary, she serves on the Society's Museum Committee and has been a guide in the Dr. Moses Mason House Museum for the past six years.

SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. These may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents should include 5% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should include \$3 for postage and handling.

Moses Mason House Tile \$3.50
Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) \$2 ea.

Moses Mason House Bethel Railroad Station
Summer House Bethel Covered Bridge

Booklets

"Bethel's Broad Street" 75¢
"The Family Farm" 75¢
"Made in Bethel" 75¢
"Dr. Moses Mason and His House" \$1
"Molly Ockett" \$2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill \$2
1880 Map of Entire Town (Bethel) \$2
1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill \$1
1858 Atlas of Oxford County \$6.50
Tote Bag (Moses Mason Museum logo) \$7.50
Placemats, 4 Season (set of four) \$7.50

Special Editions

Bethel Citizen (1974) \$1
Indian Raid '81 \$1

Books

BETHEL, MAINE CEMETERIES \$9.50
Russell, INDIAN NEW ENGLAND BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER \$11.95
William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF WOODSTOCK, MAINE \$19.95
B. G. Willey, INCIDENTS IN WHITE MOUNTAIN HISTORY \$25
Maxim & Lapham, HISTORY OF PARIS \$55
Holt, GRAND TRUNK LINES OF NEW ENGLAND \$24.95
D. B. Wight, WILD RIVER WILDERNESS \$4
Francis Parkman, THE GOULD ACADEMY STORY \$7.50
MAINE IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC \$29.95
BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY COOKBOOK \$5
Thomas Hubka, BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE BARN: THE CONNECTED FARM BUILDINGS OF NEW ENGLAND Paper \$19.95. Cloth \$29.95
William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF NORWAY, MAINE \$55
M. F. King, ANNALS OF OXFORD \$48
Jean Lipman, RUFUS PORTER REDISCOVERED \$14.95
A TRUTHFUL LIKENESS: CHESTER HARDING AND HIS PORTRAITS \$25
Paula Wight, NEWRY PROFILES \$5
Eva Bean, EAST BETHEL ROAD \$50
R. H. Bennett, OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE \$18
William B. Lapham, HISTORY OF BETHEL, 1768-1890 \$45
F. W. Kilbourne, CHRONICLES OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS \$20

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) \$7
Moses Mason Museum (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) \$6
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adult) (S,M,L,XL) \$7
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child's) (4-6-8-10-12-14) \$6

Post Cards: Dr. Mason, Agnes Mason,

Moses Mason House 10¢ ea.

Bethel Historical Society Calendar, 1989 \$6

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217. They will be sent by return mail.



E. Louise Lincoln (left) stands beside the microfilm cabinet given by her children in memory of their father and in honor of Mrs. Lincoln's 75th birthday. Nancy Lincoln (right) is shown with her mother following the official presentation at the June monthly meeting of the Society. This much needed donation will house the Society's more than 400 reels of microfilm.

(L. E. Davis Memoirs continued from page 2)

doing something than if I was doing nothing. Also under the Workmen's Compensation Act, I was able to draw compensation insurance for a specific loss even though I didn't have any loss of time on account of it; of course that interested me as I put all my insurance checks into our savings account which came in very handy later.

I have made something of a mess with the dates on which I reported about building the log cabin. I know it was finished the summer of 1921 so that we moved right into it from the Skillings mill house after we finished sawing in the spring of 1922; I believe it was late April that we did this. We had a very happy summer at the log house. We moved the North Newry Post Office up there from April of 1922 until October of that year. I have wondered since if it was ever authorized by the Post Office Department; I am not sure that it was.

After closing down the Skillings birch mill after getting the wood all sawed in the spring of 1922, I hired out to work at Bethel as a garage mechanic for the Herrick Brothers Company, which at that time consisted of Percy Walker of South Paris and Harry H. King of Bethel as owners. They occupied the building at the corner of Main and Railroad streets which was built by Herrick Brothers Machinists in 1907 or 1908. The garage business occupied the street level of the building while Al and Ed Herrick doing business as Herrick Brothers Machinists occupied the basement. They offered me \$30 a week which I accepted. I continued to live in the log house until October as we had the Post Office and my family lived there. I had a Hupmobile touring car and drove to Bethel in the morning and back at night.

I had sold the Chevrolet roadster and bought a Reo touring car, but that wasn't a very satisfactory car. I had a lot of clutch trouble. The Hupp was a good car. During that summer of 1922, while I worked for Herrick Brothers Co. as a mechanic, Harry King was manager and Frank Flint tended the gas pumps and clerked in the office. After business increased in May June as the roads dried out so people could use their automobiles, King asked me to take charge of the repair crew and we hired two more men, Charles E. Merrill and Guy Swan, Sr.

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AUSTIN ASSOCIATES, P.A.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Two Great Falls Plaza, Auburn, Me. 04210
207-783-9111

July 17, 1989

Bethel Historical Society
Bethel, ME 04217

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet of Bethel Historical Society at December 31, 1988, and the related statements of income and retained earnings and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the company's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Bethel Historical Society, at December 31, 1988, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

The 1987 financial statements were reviewed by us, and our report thereon, dated September 30, 1988, stated we were not aware of any material modifications that should be made to those statements for them to be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. However, a review is substantially less in scope than an audit and does not provide a basis for the expression of an opinion on the financial statements taken as a whole.

Austin Associates, P.A.

AUSTIN ASSOCIATES, P.A.
Certified Public Accountants

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES
DECEMBER 31, 1988 and 1987

	<u>1988</u>		<u>1987</u>	
	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Percent of Income</u>	<u>Percent of Income</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
Grants	\$ 9,713	16.56	.00	\$ -0-
General contributions	9,577	16.33	.98	555
Dues	5,292	9.02	8.65	4,897
Admission and sales income	6,191	10.56	29.82	16,882
Program income	58	.10	3.80	2,151
Rental income	520	.89	.40	225
Investment income	28,941	49.34	67.06	37,970
Loss on sale of securities	(2,162)	(3.69)	(3.81)	(2,157)
Unrealized gain on sale of securities	523	.89	(6.90)	(3,903)
Total income	<u>58,653</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>56,620</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>				
Bookkeeping expense	1,200	2.05	2.12	1,200
Building repairs	318	.54	.88	498
Depreciation	10,375	17.69	17.90	10,137
Director's expense	202	.34	.24	137
Dues	570	.97	.66	375
Grants	-0-	.00	.20	111
Heat, lights and water	5,290	9.02	8.38	4,747
Insurance	4,326	7.38	9.56	5,412
Janitorial services	378	.64	.14	82
Merchandise for resale	6,958	11.86	30.70	17,382
Miscellaneous	1,230	2.10	1.10	625
Office supplies and printing	3,204	5.46	6.26	3,546
Postage	1,075	1.83	2.27	1,287
Professional fees	1,080	1.84	.00	-0-
Salaries	28,654	48.85	38.27	21,670
Subscriptions	53	.10	.06	35
Supplies	140	.24	.63	355
Taxes	2,657	4.54	6.53	3,698
Telephone	639	1.09	.83	472
	<u>68,349</u>	<u>116.54</u>	<u>126.76</u>	<u>71,769</u>
<u>Net Loss</u>	<u>\$ (9,696)</u>	<u>(16.54)</u>	<u>(26.76)</u>	<u>\$ (15,149)</u>

See accountants' report.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this statement.

AUSTIN ASSOCIATES, P.A.
 CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Sometime during the latter part of that summer a shakeup of garage businesses in town took place, and when the whole thing settled down Arthur Herrick and Albion Herrick took over the garage where I worked from Percy Walker and Harry King. It was the latter part of July or early August of 1922 that Arthur Herrick closed the garage business on Mechanic Street and brought his crew and equipment down to the building at the corner of Railroad and Main streets. He had the dealership for Fords in Northern Oxford County and he brought our mechanic, Bert Gibbs with him.

When schools opened in September, our son Richard started in the old brick grammar school, which was torn down in 1955. He went into the first grade with Ethel Philbrick Bisbee as his first teacher. We were still living in the log house in Newry and he rode out with me in the morning and back at night. He was six years old.

Around October first of 1922 I bought from Philip S. Chapman the house in Bethel known as the "Robertson" house, which stood at the corner of Church and High streets on the same spot where the Walters Infirmary now stands. The price of this was \$1600 of which I paid \$800 in cash and hired the other \$800 from the Bethel Savings Bank on a first mortgage.

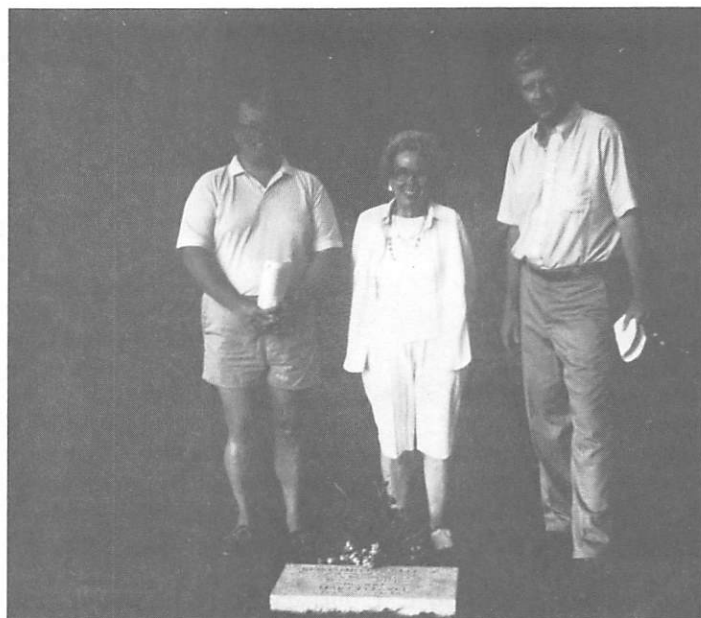
This house had two apartments; the one nearest Church Street being the older part of the house was pretty badly run down while the one of five rooms on the end toward the old grammar school building had been built within twenty years of the time I bought it.

(to be continued in the next issue)

BOOK REVIEW

PICTORIAL WOODSTOCK, MAINE, 1815-1920. By The Woodstock Historical Society. (Bryant Pond, Maine: Inman Printing, 1988. Pp. 92. Paper. \$10)

It is often said that photographs do not lie, but even the amateur photographer knows that photos lend themselves to many misconceptions if only by what they do or do not show. When using photographs to present local history, it is quite a challenge to develop a comprehensive and accurate view of a community through pictures alone. The Woodstock Historical Society recognized this and prepared their pictorial of Old Woodstock simply as a "scrapbook" presenting those photo-



The Society's annual picnic was held in July on the farm once owned by Benjamin Russell, Sr. (1739-1802), now occupied by his descendant Geraldine S. Howe shown above (center). With Mrs. Howe are Merton True Brown, Jr., Bethel Town Clerk, (left), who provided some amusing reminiscences of his years as town clerk and Society president Dr. Marvin Ouwinga (right). During the festivities, biographical sketches of Bethel town clerks were distributed to those attending and a marker dedicated to the memory of Bethel's first town clerk, Benjamin Russell and his wife, Mary, both born 250 years ago this year.

graphs that have been preserved. It was not their intent to chronicle the town's history through photos. In an extremely abbreviated summary of Woodstock's history by the society's curator, the reader encounters only lists of significant topics and no details. Somewhat more information is offered in the generally brief and direct identifying captions. Unfortunately, there is no real sense of continuity in this form of presentation.

Since many early photographs were made by professional photographers, there tended to be a similarity of subject matter for photographs taken in the nineteenth century. This certainly seems to be the case, at least with the surviving photographs,

(continued on page 8)

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.

Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (5) quarterly publication |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (6) reduced course fees |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (7) voting rights in the Society |
| (4) special library and archival privileges | (8) special invitations to Society occasions |

(Please Print)

Name

Address

.....
Signature

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217 (effective Jan. 1, 1987)

..... Sustaining (Individual) \$5

..... Contributing \$15

..... Patron \$30

..... Benefactor \$40

..... Students (under 18 years) \$2

..... Senior (over 55 years) \$3

..... Life over 55 years \$50 single

..... Life over 55 years \$75 couple

..... Life under 55 years \$100 single

..... Life under 55 years \$150 couple

..... Individual preference (any amount over \$5)

..... Corporate \$50



Anthropologist Harald E. L. Prins of Hallowell (left) who addressed the August meeting of the Society on Maine Indians poses with Louis Paul of the Woodstock (New Brunswick) Maliseet Indian Reserve and Society president Dr. Marvin Ouwinga (right). Dr. Prins' appearance was made possible in part by a grant from the Maine Humanities Council. Photo courtesy of Donald S. Brown.

(Book Review, continued from page 7)

for Woodstock. Over three-fourths of the pictorial is devoted to the town's architectural history. No attempt was made to include recent photographs of significant structures that still exist, but for which no old photos were discovered. For example, the pre-Civil War Andrews Mill at South Woodstock is not included even though its historic importance is widely recognized. Nor is there an example of the corn-canning factories that were so much a part of the area's agriculture. But, such recording was not the purpose of this project as is clearly stated in the Foreword.

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Marvin Ouwinga, President; Jane Hosterman, Vice President; Kenneth Bohr, Secretary and Clerk of the Trustees; Margaret Joy Tibbetts, Treasurer; Trustees: Donald S. Brown, Lynda H. Chandler, Alden T. Kennett, Mary C. Keniston, Sylvia Wight

CELEBRATION 200

Dr. Moses Mason

1789-1866

BUSINESS/CORPORATE SPONSORS

Bethel Furniture Stock — Bethel Inn & Country Club — Bethel Savings Bank — Bethel Spa Motel and Shops — Boise Cascade — Contel of Maine — Goodwin's Inc. — Ross Joly Realty, Inc. — Ralph Merrill Plumbing & Heating — Prims Rexall Pharmacy #2 — Shearwater Design — Sunday River Ski Resort — Western Maine Supply — Williams Co. — Gillies Realty.

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For the reader interested in more than the architectural past of Woodstock, the "Pot Pourri" section of this book includes some excellent photographs. Here we are given glimpses of the everyday events that were the substance of life for the era. We are indebted to those who recorded the activities of ice cutters and snow rollers which must have seemed quite mundane to contemporaries but which are valuable commentaries on the times.

Perhaps this book's real contribution to Woodstock's history is yet to come. For it was the intent of the historical society to present this as the overview of their current holdings in hopes of stimulating residents of the town to dig into their own collections and fill gaps in Woodstock's pictorial past.

Joyce Wanger

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